

ALVAN

Good Advice

TO THE

Church of England, Roman Catholick, and
Protestant Dissenter.

In which it is endeavoured to be made appear
that it is their

Duty, Principles & Interest

To abolish the

Penal Laws and Tests.

Beati Pacifici.

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ANSWER

Walter de la Mare London

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THE

P R E F A C E.

Reader,

NO matter who, but what ; and yet if thou wouldest know the Author, he is an English-man, and therefore obliged to this Country, and the Laws that made him Free.

That single Consideration were enough to command this Undertaking ; for 'tis to persuade his Country Men to be delivered of the greatest Yoke a Nation can well suffer under ; Penal Laws for Religion, I mean.

And

The Preface.

And now thou hast, both the who, and what; If thou art Wise and Good, thou art above my Epethites, and more my Flat-teries; If not, I am in the Right to let 'um alone. Read, Think and Judge. Liberty, English and Christian, is all that is sought in the ensuing Discourse.

Adicu-

Good Advice, &c.

P A R T I.

IMUST own 'tis my Aversion at this time, to meddle with Publick Matters, and yet my Duty to the Publick will not let me be Silent. They that move by Principles must not regard *Times* nor *Actions*, but what is *just*, and what is *honourable*; and that no Man ought to Scruple, nor no Time nor Interest to Contest.

The single Question I go upon, and which does immediately concern and exercise the Minds of the Thinking, as well as Talking Men of this Kingdom, is, *whether it be fit to repeal the Penal Laws and Tests, in matters of Religion, or not.* I take the Affirmative of the Question, and humbly submit my Reasons to every reasonable Conscience. I say reasonable, because That which knows not its own Duty, Principles and Interest, is not so, and that which is not willing to do to others as it would be done by, less deserves to be thought so.

Now there are three sorts of People that will find themselves concerned in this Question; *The Church of England, the Roman Catholick, and the Protestant Dissenter*, and these make up the whole Body of the Kingdom; If it appear to be their Duty, Principles and Interest, the Question is gain'd, and no body is left to complain; and if I am mistaken, it is with so great an Inclination to serve them all, that their good nature cannot but plead my Excuse, especially when they consider I am neither mov'd by Hopes nor Fears. Private Loss or Gain being farther from my thought, then I hope they are from a good Understanding.

If say, first; then it is the Duty of all of them, because they all profess that Religion which makes it their common duty to do it ; Christianity, I mean : For no Christian ought to deprive any man of his native Right for matters of Faith and Worship towards God, in the way that he thinks most agreeable to the Will of God ; because it is necessary to a Christian to believe that Faith is the Gift of God alone, and that He only is Lord of Conscience, and is able truly to enlighten, perswade, and establish it ; and consequently that prejudicing Men in their Persons or Estates, or depriving them of any Station in the Government, they might otherwise, in their turn, be capable to serve the Publick in, is contrary to the tenderness and equity of that Religion ; which will yet further appear, if we consider that Christianity is the sole Religion of the World, that is built on the Principles of Love ; which brought with it the greatest Evidences of Truth. Equally convincing our Understandings with its *Light*, and bearing down our Sences with its *Miracles* : Which silenc'd the Oracles of the Heathens by the Divine Power present with it, and vanquisht their Hearts, that had left nothing else to conquer, leading Kings and Emperors with their Courts and Armies in triumph after the despised *Cross* of him, who was the holy, and blessed Author of it.

It was he that laid not his Religion in worldly Empire, nor used the Methods of worldly Princes to propagate it ; as it came from Heaven; so that only should have the Honour of protecting and promoting it. His whole business to mankind, from first to last, was *Love*. 'Twas first Love in his Father to send him (as St. John teaches) *God so loved the World that he sent his Son, &c.* It was love in Jesus Christ to come on that Arrand ; that he, who thought it no Robbery to be equal with God, should take the form of a Servant to adopt us Children, and make himself of no Reputation with the World,

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World, that he might make us of Reputation with God his Father.

And he did not only come in much Love, but preach't it and prest it both to Friends and Foes ; *Love one another, Love Enemies, do good to them that hate you, forgive them that trespass against you; what you would that other Men should do unto you, do that unto them;* by these things shall all Men know you are my Disciples ; for I came not to destroy Mens Lives, no, not for Religion it self ; for my Kingdom, Power, Force, Weapons, and Victory are not of this World. In all this Love prevails. It was his great, his new, his last Commandment ; of all his Disciples, the most persued by his beloved One, that in his Bosom had learn'd his Heart, as his Divine Doctrine of Love in his Epistle tells us.

As he liv'd in Love, so he died in Love, with us, and for us, and that while we were rebellious too ; ay, he pray'd and dy'd for them who put him to Death, *shewing us (says St. Peter) an Example that we also should follow his Steps.* And what are they ? doubtless the Steps of Love, the Path he trod : To do good to Mankind, Enemies as well as Friends, that we may be like our heavenly Father, *that causes his Sun to shine, and his Rain to fall upon the Just and Unjust.* This must be the Apostles meaning, for the rest of his Passion was Inimitable.

Now if this be the *Doctrine of Christ, the Nature of Christianity, the Practice of the Primitive Church,* that, like Adam, was Created in full Strength, Beauty and Wisdom, and so an Example to succeeding Ages of Religion, and to which we so often refer as our Original ; with what Pretence to a Christian Conscience can any one stickle to keep Imprisoning, Banishing, Impoverishing, Hanging and Quartering Lawt on foot for Religion sake, but especially against such as are by Creed professors of Christianity as well as themselves.

I know the Case is put hard by those that have the Laws on their side, *We do this to save our selves*; but an harder Case than Christ's can never be put, whose Answer in his, ought to resolve theirs fully.

Christ is sent by his Father for the Salvation of the World: He introduces and proves his Mission by Miracles, and the greater Authority of his Word and Doctrines. His Followers fully satisfied who he was, whence he came, what he taught, and how eminently confirm'd, grew impatient at Contradiction; they could not bear the least Dissent; for when some of the *Samaritans* refused to entertain their Lord, because they thought he was going for *Jerusalem*, the place of their greatest aversion; these Disciples were for having but the Word from his Mouth, and they would, in imitation of *Elijah*, have called for *Fire from Heaven to have destroy'd them*. But he turned and rebuked them, and said, *ye know not what manner of Spirit ye are of, for the Son of Man is not come to Destroy Men's Lives, but to Save them*. This Answer is to purpose, and for all times, to be sure Christian ones; and the higher the Pretensions of any Party are to Christianity, the more inexcusable if they practice the contrary. Would not Christ then hurt them that refused him, and can we hurt our Neighbors for not receiving us? He condemned that Spirit in his Disciples, and shall we uphold the same Spirit, and that by Law too, which he condemned by his Gospel? This is *killing for Gods sake*, expressly charg'd by Christ with Impiety.. They *shall think*, says he to his Disciples, *they do God good Service to kill you*; who should think so? why the *Christian Persecutors*. Is it their Property to do so? yes, what shall one think then of those Christians that profess it,

The Jews were grievously punished of God, for that abomination of sacrificing their Children to *Moloch*, but these Laws, tho they change the Object, they have not lessen'd
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the Sin ; for they offer up Man, Woman and Child, and tho' they say 'tis to God, no matter for that, since it makes their Cause worse, for 'tis to imagine that so good, so just, so sensible, so merciful a Beeing can take Pleasure in se much Cruelty. Well, but if we must not knock Folks on the Head, what must we do with them ? Take an Answer at the Mouth of Truth and Wisdom : Let the Tears and Wheat grow together till the Harvest ; what's that ? he tells you, 'tis the End of the World ; so that whatever the Church of England is, 'tis certain Christ is for a Totalerion, and his Doctrine is always in Fashion ; what he was, he is, and will be ; he went not by Reasons of State, or Customs of Countries ; his Judgment was better built, who came to give Law, and not receive it, and 'tis a Light and Rule to all times : *And He that loves Father, or Mother, or Wife, or Children, or House, or Land better than him, that is, his Doctrine* (of which this is so great a part) *is not worthy of him* ; and I fear no other Reason induces the Church of England to decline it.

To confirm what has been said, tho' I design Brevity, let me not lose another Passage very pregnant to our purpose ; when his Disciples had accomplisht their first Mission, at their return they gave him the History of their Travels : Among the rest, they tell him of one they met with, that in his Name cast out Devils, but because he wculd not follow with them, *they forbade him* ; here is at least a Dissenting Christian, tho' a Believer, yet it seems not one of that closer Congregation ; we also see their Zeal and Sentence. But what says the Master, yet alive, and with them, the infallible Doctor, in whose Mouth was no Guile, who had not the Spirit by measure, and was the great Wisdom of God to his People ; was he of the same mind, or did he leave them without rule in the Point ? His Answer is this. *And Jesus, said to them, forbid him not, for he that is not against us is for us.* The Prohibition is taken off,

off, and their Judgment rever's'd, and from his, to be sure, ther lies no Appeal. For tho' a Power of Decision were allow'd to some one or more on Earth, in matters obscure and undetermined, yet in cases *already adjudged by the Son of God himself who had the Chair, and could not Err,* there can be no room for another Judge.

Now to apply it, I must first say, I find no such Disciple among those that are of the side of keeping up the *Penal Law*. God knows, the disparity is but too unequal. But next, if they were all *Twelve in Westminster Abby*, and should be of the side of upholding the *Penal Laws* (which is the wrong side they were of before) I should beg their Pardon, if I were of their Masters mind, an i objected his Wisdom to their Zeal, and his gentle Rule to their harsh and narrow Judgment. And I beseech the Church of *England* to consider, that no Pretence can excuse her Disent, and less her cross Practice to the Judgment of her Saviour: *A Judgment that seems given and settled for the Conduct of the Church on the like Occasions in succeeding times.* And 'tis pitty any worldly thing should have place with her to divert her Obedience. Did Christ then come to save Men Lives, and not to destroy them? and should she (she I say that pretends to be a reformed Church) uphold those Laws that do destroy them? He, Alas! went to another Village instead of burning them, or theirs, for refusing him: And this forbids any, that belongs to any other, to lodge in hers, upon pain of loosing Life or Estate; This may make her a *Samaritan* indeed; but not the **good One**, whose Example would have taught her, instead of these sharp and ruder Remedies to have poured the Oyle of Peace and Gladness into thos Chops and Wounds that Time and Heats of all Hands have made in every Religious Party of Men. Nor does she lose anything by repealing those Laws, but the Power of persecuting, and a good Church would never have the Temptation

Come some body must begin to forgive, let her not leave that Honour to another, nor draw upon her self the Guilt and Mischief of refusing it. She pretends to fear the Strokes of the Romanists, but I would fain know of her, if following their Example will convert them, or secure her? Does she hope to keep them out by the Weapons that have fail'd in their Hands, or can she honourably censure Persecution in them, and yet use it her self?

But she is extreamly scandal'd and scared at the Severity upon *Protestants in France.* 'Tis certainly very ill; but do not the Laws she is so fond of point at the same Work, *Conformity,* or *Ruine.* .. And don't we know, that in some Places, and upon some Parties her Magistrates have plow'd as deep Furrows, especially within these six and twenty Years. *Husbands separated from their Wives, Parents from their Children, the Widows Bed and the Orphans. Milk made a Prize for Religion, Houses stript, Barns and Fields swept clean, Prisons crowded without regard to Sex or Age, and some of both sorts Dangin'd to Death, and all for Religion.* .. If she says they were peevish Men, Biggots, or mov'd by *private Interest*, she still made the Laws, and says no more for her self than the French say for their King, which yet she refuses to take for an Answer. Perhaps I could parralel some of the severest Passages in that Kingdom out of the Actions of some Members of the Church of *England* in *cool Blood*, that are even yet for continuing the *Penal Laws* upon their plunder'd Neighbours; so that this Reflection of hers upon *Frante*, is more popular than just from her. But I beseech her to look upon a Country four times bigger than *France*; *Germany* I mean, and she will there see both Religions practis'd with great Ease and Amity, yet of this we must not hear one Word: I hope it is not for fear of imitating it. However 'tis disingenious to object the Mischiefs of Popery to a general Ease, when we see it is the way to prevent them.

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This is but in the name of Popery *to keep al to her self*, as well from Protestant Dissenters, as Roman Catholicks. How Christian, how equal, how safe, that narrow Method is, becomes her well to consider, and methinks she ought not to be long about it.

I know she flatters her self and others to believe, she is a *Bulwork* against Popery; and with that, without any further Security to other Protestants, wipes her Mouth of all old Scores, and makes her present Court for Assistance. But when that word *Bulwork* is examined, I fear it appears to mean no more than this, *That she would keep out Popery for that reason for which she apprehends Popery would turn her out*, viz. **Temporal Interest**. But may I without Offence ask her, when she kept Persecution out? Or if she keeps out Popery for any bodies sake but her own? Nay, if it be not to hold the Power she has in her Hands, that she would frighten other Parties (now she has done her worst), with what Mischief Popery would do them when it has Power. But to speak freely, can she be a *Bulwork* in the Case, that has been bringing the worst part of Popery in these six and twenty Years, if *Persecution be so as she says it is?* This would be call'd *Canting* to the World in others. But I hear *she begins to see her Fault*, is *heartily sorry for it*, and promises to do so no more: And why may not Popery be as wise, that has also burnt her Fingers with the same Work? Their praying for Ease by *Law* looks as if they chose That rather than *Power* for Security; and if so, why may not the Papists Live, as well as she Reign? I am none of their Advocate, I am no Papist, but I would be just and merciful too. However, I must tell her, that keeping the Laws on foot, by which she did the Mischief, is none of the plainest Evidences of her Repentance: They that can believe it, have little reason to quarrel the unaccountableness of Transubstantiation. Is it unjust in Popery to invade her

Priviledges, and can it be just in her to provoke it, by denying a Christian Liberty? or can she expect what she will not give? or not do as she would be done by, because she fears others will not observe the same Rule to her? Is not this *doing Evil that Good may come of it*, and that uncertain too, against an express Command as well as common Charity? But to speak freely, whether we regard the Circumstances of the King, the Relation of his Children, the inequality of the Number and Strength of those of each of their Communions, we must conclude, that the Aversion of the Church of *England* to this intreated Liberty, cannot reasonably be thought to come from the Fear she has of the prevalency of Popery, but the loss of the Power the Law gives her to domineer over all Dissenters. And is not this a *Rare Motive* for a Christian Church to continue Penal Laws for Religion? If her Piety be not able to maintain her upon equal terms, methinks her having so much the whip-hand and start of all others, should satisfy her Ambition, and quiet her Fears; for 'tis possible for her to keep the Churches if the Laws were abolished; all the difference is, she could not force: She might perswade and convince what she could: And pray, is not that enough for a true Church, without *Goales, Whips, Halters and Gibbets*? O what Corruption is this that has prevailed over Men of such Pretensions to Light and Conscience? that they do not, or will not, see nor tell their own Principles one remove from themselves; but sacrifice the noblest part of the Reformation to Ambition, and compel Men to trule their tender Consciences to the Grandure and Dominion of their Doctors.

But because the Sons of the Church of *England* keep at this time, such a stir in her favour, and fix her excellency in her opposition to Popery, it is worth while to consider a little further if really the most feared and disagreeable part of Popery in her own Opinion, does not belong to her, and if it does, should we

not be in a fine Condition, to be in Love with our Fetters, and to court our Misery ?

That part of *Papery* which the Church of *England* with most success objects against, is her *Violence*. This is that she can only pretend to fear : Her Doctrines she partly Professes or thinks she can easily refute. She does not think her Doctors *Conjurers* for their *Transubstantiation*, or dangerous to the State for their *Beads*, or their *Purgatory*. But forcing others to their Faith, or ruining them for refusing it, is the terrible thing we are taught by her to apprehend. Now granting this to be the case, in reference to the Roman Religion, where it is in the Chair : I ask, if the Church of *England*, with her better Doctrines, has not been Guilty of this Impiety, and for that cause more blameable than the Church she opposes so much? If we look into her A&ts of State, we find them many, and bitter, against all sorts of Dissenters. There is nigh twenty Laws made, and yet in force, to constrain Conformity, and they have been executed too, as far and as often as she thought it fit for her Interest to let them. Some have been Hang'd, many Banish't, more Imprisoned, and some to Death ; and abundance Impoverish't ; and all this meerly for Religion : Tho, by a base and barbarous use of Words, it has been call'd *Treason*, *Sedition*, *Routs and Riots* ; the worst of Aggravations, since they are not contented to make People unhappy for their Dissent, but rob them of all they had left, their *Innocency*. This has been her State Craft, to coin Guilt, and make men dangerous, to have her ends upon them. But that way of Palliating Persecution, by rendring a thing that it is not, and punishing men for Crimes they never committed, shows but little Conscience in the Projectors. The Church of *England* crys out against *Transubstantiation*, because of the Invisibility of the Change. She don't see Christ there, and therefore he is not there, and yet her Sons do the same thing. For tho all the tokens

tokens of a Riot are as invisible in a Dissenters Meeting, as Christ in the Transubstantiation, yet it must be a Riot without any more to do : The English of which is, 'tis a Riot to pray to God in the humblest and peaceablest manner in a Conventicle.

I know it is laid, *The Blood-shed in the fore-going Raign, and the Plots of the Papists against Queen Elizabeth, drew those Laws from the Church of England.* But this was no reason why she should do ill because they had done so : Besides, it may be answered, that that Religion having so long intermixt itself with worldly Power, it gave way to take the revenges of it. And certainly the great men of the Church of England endeavouring to intercept Queen Mary, by proclaiming the Lady Jane Gray, and the Apprehension the Papists had of the better Title of Mary Queen of Scots, together with a long Possession, were scurvy Temptations to kindle ill Designs against that extraordinary Queen. But tho nothing can excuse and less justifie those cruel Proceedings ; yet if there were any reason for the Laws, it is plainly removed ; for the Interests are joyn'd, and have been since King James the first came to the Crown. However 'tis certain there were Laws enough, or they might have had them, to punish all civil Enormities, without the necessity of making any against them as Papists. And so the civil Goverment had stood upon its own Legs, and Vices only against it had been punishable by it. In short, it was the falsest Step that was made in all that great Queens Raign, and the most dishonourable to the Principles of the first Reformers, and therefore I know no better Reason why it should be continued, than that which made the Cardinal in the History of the Council of Trent oppose the Reformation at Rome ; That tho it was true that they were in the wrong, yet the admitting of it *approved the judgment of their Enemies, and so good-night to Infallibility.* Let not this be the Practice of

the Church of *England*, and the rather, because she does not pretend to it: but let her reflect, that she has lost her King from her Religion, and they that have got him, naturally hope for ease for theirs by him, that 'tis the end they labour'd, and the great use they have for him, and I would f_{or} a wonder that she never saw it before; but whether she did or no, why should she begrudg it, at least refuse it now? Since 'tis plain, that there is nothing we esteem dangerous in Popery, that other Laws are not sufficient to secure us from: Have we not enough of them? let her think of more, and do the best she can to *discover Plotters, punish Traitors, suppress the Seditious, and keep the Peace better than those we have can inable us to do:* But for Gods sake, let us never direct Laws against Men for the cause of Religion, or punish them before they have otherwise done amiss. Let Mens Works, not their Opinions, turn the Edg of the Magistrates Sword against them, else 'tis Beheading them before they are Born.

By the common Law of this Kingdom there must be some *Real and Proper Overt Act* that proves Treason; some *Malice* that proves Sedition; and some *violent Action* that proves a Rout or Riot. If so, to call any sort of Religious Orders, the one, or *Praying to God in a way out of fashion*, the other, is preposterous and punishing People for it, down right *Murther*, or *Breach of the Peace*, according to the true use of Words, and the old Law of *England*.

If the Church of *England* fears the growth of Popery, let her be true to the Religion she owns, and betake her self to *Faith*, rather than *Force*, by a *pious, humble, and a good Example*: To *convince and persuade*, which is the highest honour to any Church, and the greatest Victory over Men. I am for a National Church as well as she, so it be by *Consent*, and not by *Constraint*. But Coercive Churches have the same Principle, tho not the same Interest.. A Church, by *Law established*, is a State

State Church, and that is no Argument of Verity, unless the State that makes her so be infallible; and because that will not be asserted, the other can never oblige the Conscience, and consequently the Compulsion she uses, is unreasonable. This very Principle *justifies the King of France, and the Inquisition.* For Laws being equally of Force in all Countries where they are made, it must be as much Fault in the Church of Englands Judgment to be a Protestant at Rome, or a Calvanist at Paris, as to be a Papist at London: Then where is Truth or Conscience but in the Laws of Countries! which renders her an Hobbiest, notwithstanding her long and loud Clamours against the Leviathan.

I beg her, for the love of Christ, that she would think of these things, and not esteem me her Enemy for performing the part of so good a Friend. Plain Dealing becomes that Character; no matter whether the Way be agreeable, so it be right: We are all to do our Duty, and leave the rest to God: He can best answer for our Obedience, that commands it; and our Dependance upon his Word, will be our Security in our Conduct. What weight is it to a Church, that she is *the Church by Law established,* when no humane Law can make a true Church? A true Church is of Christ's making, and is by Gospel established. 'Tis a Reflection to a Church that would be thought true, to stoop to humane Law for her Establishment: I have been often scandal'd at that Expression from the Sons of the Church of England, especially those of the Robe, *What do you talk for? our Religion is by Law established,* as if that determin'd the Question of its Truth against all other Perswasions.

The Jews had this to say against our Saviour, *We have a Law, and by our Law he ought to Dye.* The Primitive Christians, and some of our first Reformers Dyed *as by Law established,* if that would mend the matter; but does that make it lawful

lawful to a Christian Conscience? We must ever demur to this Plea. No greater Argument of a Churches Defection from Christianity than turning Persecutor. 'Tis true, the Scripture says, *The Earth shall help the Woman*, but that was to save her self, *not to destroy others*: For 'tis the Token that's given by the Holy Ghost of a false Church; *That none must Buy or Sell in her Dominions that will not receive her Mark in their Forehead or Right-hand*. That is by going to Church against Conscience, or bribing lustily to stay at Home.

Things don't change, tho men do. Persecution is still the same, let the hand alter never so often; but the Sin may not: For doubtless it is greatest in those that make the highest claim to Reformation. For while they plead their own Light for doing so, they hereby endeavour to extinguish anothers Light that can't concur. What a Man can't do, *it is not his Fault he don't do, nor should he be compell'd to do it, and a least of all be punished for not doing it*. No Church can give Faith, and therefore can't force it; for what is constrain'd is not believed; since Faith is in that fence free, and constraint gives no time to assent; I say, what I don't will is not I, and what I don't Choose is none of mine, and anothers can't save me, tho it should save him. So that this Method never obtains the end design'd, since it Saves no body, because it Converts no body; it may breed Hypocrisie, but that is quite another thing than *Salvation*.

What then is the use of Penal Laws? only to show the Sincerity of them that suffer, and Cruelty of those that make and execute them. And all time tells us they have ever fail'd those that have lean'd upon them: They have always been losers at last: Besides it is a most unaccountable obstinacy in the Church of England to stickle to uphold them, for after having made it a matter of Religion and Conscience to Address the late King in behalf of this, to think he should leave his Conscience behind him in Flanders, or when they waited on him

him to the Crown, that he should sead it thither upon a Pilgrimage, is want of wit at best, pardon the censure. Could they Conscientiously oppose his Exclusion for his Religion, and now his Religion because he will not leave it ? Or can they reasonably maintain those *Tests* that were contrived to exclude him when *Duke of York*, while they endured none to hinder him from the Crown ? I heartily beg the Church of England's excuse, if I say I can't comprehend her : Perhaps the fault is mine, but sure I am she is extreamly dark. How could she hope for this King without his Conscience ? or conceive that his Honour or Conscience would let him leave the Members of his Communion under the lash of so many Destroying Laws ? would she be so serv'd by a Prince of her own Religion, and she in the like Circumstances ? She would not, let her talk till Dooms-Day.

To object the King's promise, when he came to the Crown, against the repeal of the Penal Laws, shows not his Insincerity, but her Uncharitableness, or that really she has a very weak place : For it is plain the King first declared his own Religion, and then promised to maintain hers ; but was that to be without, or together with his own ? His Words shows he intended that his own should Live, tho' t'other might Rain. I say again, it is not credible that a Prince of any Sincerity can refuse a being to his own Religion, when he continues another in its well-being. This were to act upon State not Conscience, and to make more Conscience to uphold a Religion he cannot be of; than of giving ease to one his Conscience obliges him to be of. I cannot imagin how this thought could enter into any Head that had Brains, or Heart that had Honesty. And to say true, they must be a sort of State Consciences, Consciences as by Law Establish'd, that can follow the Law against their Convictions.

But this is not all I have to observe from that objection : It implies too evidently, first, that she thinks her self shaken, if

the *Penal Laws* be repeal'd ; then by Law established she must mean, *Established by those Penal Laws*. Secondly that the King having promised to maintain her, as by Law established, he ought not to endeavour their Repeal by which she is established. I confess this is very close arguing, but then she must not take it ill, if all Men think her ill founded ; for any thing must be so, that is established by destroying Laws ? Laws that *Time* and *Practice* have declared Enemies to *Property* and *Conscience*. O let her not hold by that Charter, nor Point thither for her Establishment and Defence, if she would be thought a Christian Church.

Plutarch had rather one should think there never was such a Man in the World, than that *Plutarch* was an ill Man. Shall the Church of *England*, that glories in a great Light, be more concern'd for her Power, than her Credit ? To be, than to be that which she should be ? I would say, far be it from her, for her own sake, and which is of much more moment, for the sake of the general Cause of Religion.

Let us see therefore if there be not another way of understanding those Words, more decent to the King, and more honourable for her, viz. that she is in the *National Chair*, has the *Churches and Revenues*, and is *Mother* of those that do not adhere to any separate Communion, and that the King has promised to maintain her in this Post from the Invasions of any other persuasion that world wrest these Priviledges out of her hands : this he promised formerly ; this he has very particularly repeated in his gracious Declaration : But to Ruin Men that would not conform, while himself was so great a Dissenter, and came such, to her knowledge, to the Crown, can be no part of his Promises in the Opinion of common Sence and Charity. Is there no Difference to be observed between not turning her out, and destroying all others not of her Communion : He will not turn her out, there's his Promise, and he has not done

it, there's his performance: Nor will he do it, I am confident, it she pleases. But there is no manner of necessity from this Engagement that all Parties else are to be confounded. Tho if it were so, 'tis ill Divinity to press such Promis's upon a Princes Conscience, that can't be perform'd with a good One by any Body.

Let her remember how often she has upbraided her Dissenters with this, *Render to Cesar the things that are Cesaars*, whilst they have returned upon her t'other half of the Text, *and render unto God the things that are Gods*. It happens now that God and Cesar are both of a mind, which perhaps does not alwayes fall out, at least about the Point in hand. Will she Dissent from both now? Her case, believe me, will be doubtful then. I beg her to be Considerate. 'Tis the greatest time of Tryal she has met with since she was a Church. To acquit her self like a Member of Christ's Universal One, let her keep nothing that voids her Pretentions. The Baboonish Garment will undo her. Practices inconsistant with her Reformation will ruin her. The *Martyrs Blood* won the Day, and her Severity has almost lost it. They suffer'd by Law, she makes Laws for Suffering. Is this an Immitation of their Practice, *to uphold the Weapons of their Destruction?* I'm iſt tell her, 'tis being a *Martyr* for Persecution, and not by it. Another Path then that the holy Ancients, and our humble Ancestors trod, and which will lead her to be deserted and contemned of every Body that counts it safer to follow the Blessed Rule and Practice of Christ and his inspir'd Messengers, then her narrow and worldly Policies. But that which heightens the Reproach, is the Offer of the Romanists themselves to make a perpetual civil peace with her, and that she refuses. Would the Martyrs have done this? surely no. Let her remember the first Argument honest old *Fox* advances against that Church, is the Church of Englands present Darling, viz. *Penal Laws* for Religion; as she may see at the beginning of

his first Volume: Doubtless he was much in the right, which makes her extreamly in the wrong. Nothing, says the Prophet, must harm in Gods holy Mountain, and that's the Church sayes *Fax*, and therefore he says, Christ's Church never persecutes. Leave then God with his own Work, and Christ with his own Kingdom: As it is not of the World, let not the World touch it; no, not to uphold it, tho they that bear it should trip by the way. Remember *Uzza*, he would needs support the Ark when the Oxen stumbled; but was struck dead for his pains. The Presumption is more than Parallel. Christ promis'd to be present with his Church to the end of the World. He bid them fear not, and told them, That sufficient was the Day for the Evil thereof. How? with Penal Laws? no such matter; but his Divine Presence. Therefore it was, He call'd not for Legions to fight for him, because his Work needed it not. They that want them have an other sort of Work to do: And 'tis too plain, that Empire, and not Religion, has been too much the Business. But, O let it not be so any more! To be a True Church is better than to be a National One; especially as to uphold. Press Virtue, Punish Vice, Dispense with Opinion; Perswade, but don't Impose. Are there Tares in Opinion? let them alone; you heard they are to grow with the Wheat till Harvest, that is, the end of the World. Should they not be pluckt up before? no; and tis Angels Work at last too. Christ that knew all Men, saw no Hand on Earth fit for that Business. Let us not then usurp their Office! Besides, we are to love Enemies; this is the great Law of our Religion; by what Law then are we to persecute them? and if not Enemies, not Friends and Neighbours certainly.

The Apostle rejoiced That Christ was Preached out of Envy, If so, I am sure we ought not to envy Christians the enjoyment of the Liberty of their Consciences. Christianity should be propagated by the Spirit of Christianity; and not by Violence

lence or Persecution, for that's the Spirit of Antichristianity. Nor for fear of it, should we, of Christians, become Antichristians. Where is Faith in God? where is trust in Providence? let us do our Duty, and leave the rest with Him; *and not do Evil that Good may come of it*; for that shows a Distrust in God, and a Confidence in our own Inventions for security. No reason of State can excuse our Disobedience to his Rule; and we desert the Principles of our heavenly Master when we decline it. The Question is about Conscience, about this we can none of us be too tender nor exemplary. 'Tis in right doing that Christians can hope for Success; and for true Victory only through Faith and Patience. But if to avoid what we fear, we contradict our Principles, we may justly apprehend *that God will desert us in an unlawful way of maintaining them*. Perhaps this may be Gods time of trying all Parties, what we will do; whether we will rely upon him or our own feeble Provisions; whether we will allow what we our selves in our turn *have all of us desired*; if not, may we not expect to suffer the thing we would inflict? for our *Penal Laws* cannot secure us from the turns of Providence, and less support us under them. Let us consider the true ground of the Difficulty that is made, if it be not partial and light in Gods Scale; for to that tryal all things must come, and his Judgment is inevitable as well as infallible. Besides, if we have not tryed all other Methods, we are inexplainable in being so tenacious for this. I do therefore, in all humility, beseech all sorts of Professors of Christianity in these Kingdoms, to abstract themselves from those Jealousies which worldly Motives are apt to kindle in their Minds, and with an even and undisturbed Soul pursue their Christian Duty in this great Conjecture; Considering *the Rage is not to the Swift, nor the Battel to the Strong*, and that for all our Watchmen, *'tis God alone (at last) that keeps the City*. Not that I would decline a fitting, but an unchristian

an Provision: For though the Foundation were never so true, yet if our Superstructure be *Hay and Stuble* (our own narrow Devices) the Fire will consume it, and our Labour will be worse then in vain. Let us not therefore *Sow what we would not Reap*, because we *must Reap what we Sow*: And remember who told us, *what we measure to others shall be meeted to us again*. Let us therefore do unto all Parties of men, *as we would be done unto by them in their turn of Power*: Least our fear of their undutifulness, should tempt us out of our Duty, and so draw upon our selves the mischiefs we are afraid of. Sacred Writ is full of this, in the Doctrine of both Testaments; and as we profess to believe it, we are inexcusable if we do no practice it. Let the Spirit then of Christian Religion prevail. Let our Policies give way to our Duty, and our Fears will be overcome of our Hopes, which will not make us ashamed at the last and great Judgment: where, O God! let us all appear with Comfort.

I could yet Enlarge upon this Subject; for nothing can be more fruitful. I could say, that a Church that *Denies Infallibility*, cannot force, becau'e she cannot be *certain*, and so *Penal Laws*, (tho' it were possible that they could be lawful in others) in her, would be *Unjust*. That Scripture leaves Men to *Conviction and Perswasion*. That the true Church-Weapons are *Light and Grace*; and her punishments, *Censure and Excommunication*. That *Goals and Gibbets* are Inadiquate Methods for Conversion, and that they never succeeded. That this forbids all further light to come into the World, and so limits the Holy One, which in Scripture is made a great Sin. And lastly, that such ensnare their own Posterity that may be of another mind, and forfeit by it the estates they have so carefully transmitted to them. Thus far against *Imposition*. And against *Compliance*. I could say, that its to betray Gods Sovereignty over Conscience; To deify Men; Gratifie presumption;

fumption ; soil and extinguish truth in the mind ; obey blind-fold ; make over the Soul without Security ; turn Hipocrite, and abundance more ; each of which heads might well merit an whole chapter. But this having been well and seasonably consider'd elsewhere, I shall now proceed to the second part of this discourse, in which I will be as brief, and yet as full as I can.

PART II.

That 'tis the Principle of Men of Note of all Parties.

BUT what need is there of this, may some say, when all Parties profess to be of the same Judgment, *That Conscience ought not to be forced, nor Religion imposed upon men at their civil peril?* I own they are all of that mind, at one time or other, and therefore that I may purge my self of any Animosity to the Doctrine of the Church of *England*, I will Ingeniously confess, the severe conduct I have argued against, is not to be imputed to her Principles ; but then her Evil will be the greater, that in fact has so notoriously contradicted them. I know some of her defenders will hardly allow that too ; Those the more candid give us their Silence or Confession : For they tell us, *'tis not the Church that has done it*, which, unless they mean, the Laws were not made at Church, must needs be false, since those that made and executed them were of her own Communion, and are that great body of Members that constitute her a Church ; but by her shifting them off, *'tis* but reasonable to conclude that she tacitly condemns what she publickly disowns. One would think then it should not be so hard to perswade her to quit them, in the way she made them, or to injoyn her Sons to do it, if that language be to harsh for her.

This

22

This Story she must hear of some way, and I pray God she may endeavour to do her Duty in it. She is not alone; for every Party in Power has too evidently laps'd into this Evil; tho under the Prevalency and persecution of another Interest they have ever writ against club-Law for Religion. And to the end that I may do the Reformation Right, and the Principles of the Church of *England*, Justice, I must say, that hardly one person of any note, dyed in the time of *Queen Mary*, that did not pass Sentence upon Persecution as Antichristian, particularly *Latimer*, *Philpot*, *Bradford*, *Rogers*, very eminent Reformers. The Apologies that were writ in those times, are of the same strain, as may be seen in *Jewel*, *Haddon*, *Reynolds*, &c. and the Papists were with reason thought much in the wrong by those Primitive Protestants, for the Persecution that they raised against them, for matters of pure Religion. But what need we go so far back? is it not recent in memory, that Biⁿ op *Usher* was Employ'd to O. *Cromwell*, by some of the Clergy of the Church of *England* for Liberty of Conscience? Dr *Parr*, in the Life of Dr *Usher* Primate of *Armagh*, fol. 75. has that passage thus.

"Cromwell forbidding the Clergy, under great Penalties, to teach Schools, or to perform any part of their ministerial function, some of the most considerable Episcopal Clergy in and about London, desired my Lord *Parr* that he would use his Interest with *Cromwell* (since th^t he heard he pretended a great Respect for him) that as he granted Liberty of Conscience to almost all sorts of Religions, so the Episcopal Divines might have the same freedom of serving God in their private Congregations; since they were not permitted the publick Churches according to the Liturgy of the Church of *England*; and that neither the Ministers, nor Those that frequented That Service, might be any more hindered, or disturbed by his Soldiers: So according to their desire he

went and used his utmost Endeavours with Cromwell, for the taking off this Restraint, which was at last promised (tho' with some difficulty) that they should not be molested, provided they meddled not with any matters relating to his Government.

Certainly those Gentlemen were of my mind. And to give Dr Hammond his due, who I understand was one of them, he left it to the Witnesses of his End, as his dying Council to the Church of England, That they displaced no man out of the University or present Church, but that by Loye, and an ho'ly Life they should prevail upon those in Possession to come into their Church. But this lookt so little like the Policy, and Ambition of the Living, that they resolved it should be buried with him. This I had from an eminent Hand in Oxford, a year or two after his Death. An older man outliv'd him, and one of the most Learned and Pious of that Communion, Bishop Sanderson I mean: They were the two great Men of their fort that was of the Party. Let us see what this Reverend man says to our point.

The Word of God doth expressly forbid us to subject our Consciences to the Judgment of any other, or to usurp a Dominion over the Consciences of any One. Several cases of Conscience discussed in ten Lectures in the Divinity School at Oxford, 3 Lect. 30 Lect. pag. 103. Printed 1660.

He is not worthy to be Christ's Disciple, who is not the Disciple of Christ alone. The Simplicity and Sincerity of the Christian Faith, hath suffered a great Prejudice since we have been divided into Parties; neither is there any Hope that Religion should be restored to her former Original and Purity, until the Wounds that were made wider by our daily Quarrels and Dissentions, being anointed with the Oyle of Brotherly Love, as with a Balsom, shall begin to close again, and to grow entire into the same Unity of Faith and Charity,

20 Sect. 29. 'The

The obligation of Conscience doth not signify any Compulsion, for, to speak properly, the Conscience can no more be compelled than the Free-will. *ibid* 4. Lecture Sect. 5. pag. 109.

The express Commandment of God doth oblige the Conscience properly by it self and by its own force; and this obligation is absolute, because it doth directly and always oblige and because it obligeth all persons, and the obligation of it is never to be cancelled. *None but God alone hath power to impose a Law upon the Conscience of any Man, to which it ought to be subjected, as obliging by it self,* — This Conclusion is proved by the words of the Apostle, *There is but one Law-giver, who can both save and destroy,* In which words two Arguments do profer themselves to our Observation; In the first place they assert there is but one Legislator; not one picked out amongst many; not one above many; but one exclusively, that is to say, One, and but one only. The Apostle otherwise had made use of a very ineffectual argument, to prove what he had propounded; for he rebuketh those who unadvisedly did pass their Judgment either on the persons, or the deeds of other Men, as the Invaders of their Rights. *Who art Thou (saith he) who dost judge another?* as if he should have laid, dost thou know thy self, what thou art, and what thou dost? It doth not belong to Thee to thrust thy sawey Sickle into the harvest of another Man, much less boldly to fling thyself into the Throne of Almighty God. If already Thou art Ignorant of it, then know, that it belongeth to him alone to judge of the Consciences of men, *to whom alone it doth belong to impose Laws upon the Consciences of men, which none can do but God alone.* *ibid pag. 111, 112, 113.*

The Condition and Natural estate of the Conscience it self is so placed as it were in the middle betwixt God and the will.

will of Man, as that which is usually and truly spoken of Kings and Emperors, may as truly be verified of the Consciences of every man, *Solo Deo minores esse, nec aliquam in Terris superiorem agnoscere*; They are less than God only, and on Earth do acknowledge no Superior. That Speech of the Emperor Maximilian the first is very memorable, *Conscientij Dominari velle, est Arcem Cæli invadere; To exercise a Dominion over Consciences, is to invade the Tower of Heaven.* He is a Plunderer of the Glory of God, and a nefarious Invader of the Power that is due unto him, whosoever he is that shall claim a right to the Consciences of men, or practice an Usurpation over them. *ibid. Sect. 11. pag. 115.*

And yet this is the sad consequence of imposing Religion upon Conscience, and punishing Non-conformity with worldly Penalties.

Let us now hear what the late Bishop of Down says in his *Lib. of Prophesie* to our Point, 'I am very much displeased that so many Opinions and new Doctrines are commenced amongst us, but more troubled, that every man that liath an Opinion thinks his own and other mens Salvation is concerned in its maintenance, but most of all, that men should be Persecuted and Afflicted for disagreeing in such Opinions, which they cannot with sufficient grounds obtrude upon others necessarily, because they cannot propound them Infalibly, and because they have no warrant from Scripture so to do; for if I shall tye other men to believe my Opinion, because I think I have a place of Scripture which seems to warrant it to my understanding; why may he not serve up another dish to me in the same Dress, and exact the same task of me to believe the contradictory? *Liberty of Prophesie*, Epist. Dedic. pag. 8, 9.

'The Experience which Christendom hath had in this last Age is Argument enough that *Toleration of differing Opinions* is

is so far from disturbing the Publick Peace, or destroying the Interest of Princes and Common-wealths, that it does advantage to the Publick, it secures Peace, because there is not so much as the *pretence of Religion* left to such Persons to contend for, it being already indulged to them. *ibid. p. 21.*

‘It is a proverbial saying, *Quod nimia familiaritas servorum est conspiratio adversus Dominum*, and they who for their security run in Grots and Cellars, and Retirements, think that they being upon the defensiye, those Princes and those Laws that drive them to it are their Enemies, and therefore they cannot be secure, unless the Power of the one, and the Obligation of the other be lessened and rescinded ; and then the being restrained and made miserable indears the discontented Persons mutually, and makes more hearty and dangerous Confederations. *ibid. pag. 23.*

‘No man speaks more unreasonably, than he that *denies to men the use of their Reason in choice of their Religion*. *ibid. pag. 169.*

‘*No Christian is to be put to Death, Dis-membred, or otherwise directly Persecuted for his Opinion, which does not teach Impiety or Blasphemy.* *ibid. pag. 190.*

‘There is a popular Pity that follows all Persons in Misery and that Compassion breeds likeness of Affections, and that very often produces likeness of Perswasion ; and so much the rather because there arises a Jealousie and pregnant Suspition that they who Persecute an Opinion are destitute of sufficient Arguments to confute it, and that the Hangman is the best Disputant. *ibid. pag. 197, 198.*

‘If a man cannot change his Opinion when he lists, nor ever does heartily or resolutely, but when he cannot do otherwise, then to use Force, may make him a Hypocrite, but never to be a right Believer, and so instead of erecting a Trophee to God and true Religion, we build a Monument for the Devil. *ibid. pag. 200.*

‘The

* The Trick of giving Persons differing in Opinion over to
 * the secular Power, at the best is no better than *Hypocrisie*,
 * removing Envy from themselves, and laying it upon others,
 * a refusing to do that in external Act, which they do in Council,
 * and Approbation. *ibid.* pag. 209.

Thus far *Bishop Tayler*, and one of the most Learned Men
 of the Church of *England* in his time.

Let me add another Bishop, held learn'd by all, and in great
 Reputation with the men of his Communion, and among
 them the *Lords Spiritual and Temporal in Parliament assembled*,
 who have sufficiently declared against this persecuting Spirit,
 on the account of Religion, by their full approbation of, and
 thanks returned to the *Bishop of St Asaph* for his Sermon preach-
 ed before them November the 5th. 1680, and their desire that he
 would Print and Publish that Sermon. The Bishop says, that,
 ' They who are most given to hate and destroy others, especi-
 ally those others who differ from them in Religion, they are
 ' not the *Church of God*, or at least they are so far corrupt in
 that particular. *pag. 8.*

Again he says, ' That of Societies of Men, Christians, of
 all others are most averse from ways of Violence and Blood;
 especially from using any such ways upon the account of Re-
 ligion: And among Christian Churches, where they differ
 among themselves, if either of them use those ways upon the
 account of Religion, they give a strong Presumption
 against themselves that they are not truly Christians. *ibid.*
pag. 9.

' There is reason for this, because we know that Christ gave
 ' Love for the Character by which his Disciples were to be
 known. *John 13. 35.* By this shall all Men know that you are
 my Disciples, if you have Love to one another. And least men
 should unchristen others first, that they may hate them, and
 Destroy them afterwards, Christ enlarged his Precept of

'Love, and extended it even to Enemies, and not only to ours, but to the Enemies of our Religion, Matt. 5. 43, 44. *ibid.* pag. 9.

'As our holy Religion excels all others in this admirable temper, so by this we may usually judge who they are that excel among Christian Churches, when there happens any difference between them, whether touching the Faith, or the terms of Communion. They that were the more Fierce, they generally had the worst Cause, *ibid.* pag. 12, 13.

'The Council of Nice suppressed the *Arians* by no other Force, but putting *Arians* out of their Bishopricks; they could not think Hereticks fit to be trusted with cure of Souls; but otherwise, as to Temporal things, I do not find that they inflicted any kind of Punishment; but when the *Arians* came to have the Power in their Hands, when theirs was come to be the Imperial Religion, then Depriving was nothing, Banishment was the least that they inflicted. *ibid.* pag. 14.

'Neither our Religion, nor our Church, is of a persecuting Spirit. I know not how it may be in particular Persons; but I say again, it is not in the Genius of our Church: She hath no Doctrine that teacheth Persecution. *ibid.* pag. 20.

'I would have no man punished for his Religion, ne not them that destroy men for Religion. *ibid.* pag. 37.

Dr Stillingfleet comes short of none of them on this Subject. Our Saviour says he never pressed Followers as men do Soldiers; but said, If any man will come after me, let him take up his Cross (not his Sword) and follow me. His was *meekus et mansuetus roqueterus*, his very Commands shewed his Meekness; his Laws were sweet and gentle Laws; not like *Draco's* that were writ in Blood, unless it were his own that gave them. His design was

Ieronicum, a Weaper-Salve for the Church's Wounds, by Edward Stillingfleet, Rector of Sutton in Bedfordshire, in re-accto to the Reader.

was to ease men of their former Burdens, and not lay on
 more; the Duties he required were no other but such as were
 necessary, and withal very just and reasonable. He that
 came to take away the insupportable Yoke of Jewish Cere-
 monies, certainly did never intend to gall the Necks of his
 Disciples with another instead of it. And it would be strange
 the Church should require more than Christ himself did;
 and make other conditions of her Communion, than our Sa-
 viour did of Discipleship. What possible reason can be assigned
 or given why such things should not be sufficient for Com-
 munion with a Church, which are sufficient for eternal Sal-
 vation? And certainly those things are sufficient for that,
 which are laid down as necessary Duties for Christianity by
 our Lord and Saviour in his Word. What ground can there
 be why Christians should not stand upon the same terms now
 which they did in the time of Christ and his Apostles? Was
 not Religion sufficiently guarded and fenced in them? Was
 there ever more true and cordial Reverence in the Worship
 of God? What Charter hath Christ given the Church to
 bind men up to more than himself hath done? Or to exclude
 those from her Society who may be admitted into Heaven?
 Will Christ ever thank Men at the great day for keeping
 such out from Communion with his Church, when he will
 vouchsafe not only Crowns of Glory to, but it may be Aure-
 ole too, if there be any such things there? The Grand
 Commission the Apostles were sent out with, was only
 to teach what Christ had commanded them. Not the least
 Intimation of any Power given them to impose or require
 any thing beyond what himself had spoken to them, or they
 were directed to by the immediate Guidance of the Spi-
 rit of God.

Without all Controversie, the main Inlet of all the
 Distractions, Confusions and Divisions of the Christian
 World

'World, hath been by adding other Conditions of Church
'Communion than Christ hath done.

'There is nothing the *Primitive Church* deserves greater
imitation by us in, than in that admirable Temper, Mode-
ration and Condescension which was used in it towards all the
Members of it.

'This admirable Temper in the Primitive Church might
be largely cleared from that Liberty they allowed freely to
Dissenters from them in matters of Practice and Opinion;
as might be cleared from *Cyprian, Austin, Jerome,* and
others. --- Leaving the Men to be won by observing the true
decency and order of Churches, whereby those who act up-
on a true Principle of Christian Ingenuity may be sooner
drawn to a Compliance in all lawful things, than by Force
and rigorous Impositions, which make men suspect the
weight of the thing it self, when such Force is used to make
it enter. *in Preface.*

The same is in effect declared by the *House of Commons*,
when they returned their Thanks to Dr. *Tillotson, Dean of*
Canterbury, for his Sermon preached before them November
the 5th. 1678. desiring him to Print that Sermon, where he
says, upon our Saviours Words; 'Ye know not what manner of
'Spirit ye are of, Ye own your selves to be my Disciples, but
do you consider what Spirit now Acts and Governs you? not
that surely which my Doctrine designes to mould and fashi-
on you into, which is not a *Furious and Persecuting, and*
Destructive Spirit, but Mild and Gentle, and Saving; tender
of the Lives and Interests of Men, even of those who are
our greatest Enemies. pag. 6, 7.

No difference of Religion, no pretence of Zeal for God
and Christ can warrant and justify this Passionate and Fierce,
this Vindictive and Exterminating Spirit. *ibid. pag. 7.*

He (i. e. Christ) came to introduce a Religion, which
consults

consults not only the Eternal Salvation of mens Souls, but their Temporal Peace and Security, their Comfort and Happiness in this World, *ibid pag. 8.*

' In Teemed good to the Author of this Institution to compel no man to it by Temporal Punishment. *ibid. pag. 13.*

' To seperate Goodness and Mercy from God, Compassion and Charity from Religion, is to make the two best things in the World, God and Religion, good for nothing. *idid pag. 9.*

' True Christianity is not noly the best, but the best natured Institution in the World; and so far as any Church is de-parted from good Nature, and become Cruel and Barbarous, so far it is degenerated from Christianity. *idid. pag. 30.*

Thus far *Dr Tillotson*, who, to be sure, deserves not to be thought the least Eminent in the present Church of England. Let us hear what Doctor Burnet says to it.

' Men are not Masters of their own Perswasions, and can not change their thoughts as they please; he that believes any thing concerning Religion, cannot turn as the Prince commands him, or accomodate himself to the Law or his persent Interests, unless he arrive at that pitch of Atheism, as to look on Religion only as a matter of Policy, and an Engine for civil Government; *Dr Burnet's History of the Rights of Princes, &c.* in his Preface, pag. 49.

' Tis to this Doctor's pains she ows the very History of her Reformation, and as by it he has perpetuated his Name with hers, certainly he must have Credit with her, or we can deserve none with any body else, for no man could well go further to oblige her.

Let me here bring in a lay Member of the Church of England, Sir Robert Pointz, in his vindication of Monarchy, who yeilds us an excellent Testimony to the matter in hand, ' The Sword availeth little with the Souls of Men, unless to destroy them

'them together with their Bodies, and to make men desperate,
'or dissemblers in Religion, and when they find opportunity
'to fall into Rebellion, as there are many Examples. p. 27.

'In the Ancient Times of Christianity, such means were
'not used as might make Hereticks and Schismaticks more obsti-
'nate than docible, through the preposterous proceedingst of the
'Magistrates and Ministers of Justice in the Execution of
'Penal Laws, used rather as Snares for gaining of Money and
'Pecuniary Mulcts impos'd, rather as Prices set upon Offen-
'ces, than as Punishments for the Reformation of Manners,
ibid. pag. 28.

'The Ancient Christians were forbidden by the Imperial
'Law, as also by the Laws of other Christian
^{L. 6. Col. de Pagans.} Nations, under a great Penalty to meddle with
'the Goods of the Jews or Pagans living peaceably.
ibid. pag. 29.

'For, the Goods of the Jews, although Enemies to the
'Christian Religion, cannot for the cause of Religion come
'by Escheat unto Christian Princes, under whom they live.
ibid. pag. 29.

'It is truly said, that Peace, a Messenger whereof, an Angel,
'hath been chosen to be, is scarce ever established by the Sword;
'and the Gospel, the blessed Peace, cannot be published by
'the Sound of the Cannon; neither the Sacred Word be con-
'veyed unto us by the impious hands of Soldiers; neither Tran-
'quillity be brought to the Persons and Consciences of Men,
'by that which bringeth Ruin unto Nations. *ibid. pag. 30.*

He has said much in a little; the Talent and Honour of
Men truly great. I give this still to the Church of Englands
Principles, which yet makes it harder for her to justifie her
Practice in her use of Power. But let us hear a King speak,
and one the Church of England is bound to hear by many
Obligations.

King Charles the First, out of his tender and princely
sense of the sad and bleaing Condition of the Kingdom, and
his unwearied Desires to apply such Remedies, as by the bles-
sing of Almighty God, might settle it in Peace; by the
Advice of his Lords and Commons of Parliament Assem-
bled at Oxford, propounded and desired, that all the Members
of both Houses might securely meet in a full and free Con-
vention of Parliament, there to treat, consult and agree upon
such things, as may conduce to the maintenance and defence
of the Reformed Protestant Religion, with due consideration
to all just and reasonable ease to tender Consciences. The King's
Message of a Treaty, March 3. 1643. from Oxford, Super-
scribed to the Lords and Commons of Parliament assembled at
Westminster.

In the Kings twentieth Message for Peace, January 29.
1645. he has these Words, *That by the Liberty offered in his
Message of the 15th. present, for the ease of their Consciences
who will not Communicate in the Service already established by
Act of Parliament in this Kingdom, He intends that all other
Protestants behaving themselves peaceable in and towards the
civil Government, shall have the free Exercise of their Religi-
on according to their own way.*

In the Thirty third Message for Peace, November 17. 1647.
there are these Words, *His Majesty considering the great present
Distempers concerning Church Discipline, and that the Pres-
byterian Government is now in practice, his Majesty to eschew
Confusion, as much as may be, and for the satisfaction of his
two Houses, is content that the said Government be legally per-
mitted to stand in the same Condition it now is, for three Years;
provided, that his Majesty and those of his Judgment (or any other
who cannot in Conscience submit thereunto) be not obliged to com-
ply with the Presbyterian Government, but have free Practice of
their own Profession without receiving any Prejudice thereby.
From the Isle of Wight.*

In his Declaration to all his People, January 18. 1645. from Carisbrook Castle, after the Votes of no Address, He says, *I have sacrificed to my two Houses of Parliament, for the Peace of the Kingdom, all, but what is much more dear to me than my Life, my Conscience and my Honour.*

In his Letter to the Lords, Gentlemen and Committee of the Scotch Parliament, together with the Officers of the Army, July 3. 1648. from Carisbrook Castle.— *As the best foundation of Loyalty is Christianity, so true Christianity is perfect Loyalty.*

VI. ΕΙΚΩΝ ΒΑΞΙΔ Upon his Majesties retirement from Westminster.— *Sure it ceases to be Counsel, when not Reason is used, as to Men to Perswade, but Force and Terror as to Beasts, to drive and compel men to whatever tumultuary Patrons shall project. He deserves to be a Slave without Pity or Redemption, that is content to have his Rational Sovereignty of his Soul, and Liberty of his Will and Words so captivated.*— Again, ibid. *Sure that Man cannot be blameable to God or Man who seriously indeavours to see the best reason of things, and faithfully follows what he takes for reason; the uprightness of his Intentions will excuse the possible failings of his Understanding.*— Again, ibid. *I know no Resolutions more worthy a Christian King, then to prefer his Conscience before his Kingdoms.*

XII. Upon the Rebellion and Troubles in Ireland,— *Some kind of Zeal counts all merciful Moderation Lukewarmness, and had rather be Cruel than accounted Cold, and is not seldom more greedy to kill the Bear for his Skin, than for any harm he hath done.*— ibid, *O my God, thou seest how much Cruelty among Christians is acted under the colour of Religion, as if we could not be Christians unless we Crucifie one another.*

XIII. Upon the calling the Scots and their coming.— *Sure in matters of Religion those Truth's gain most on mens Judgments*

ments and Consciences which are least urged with Secular Violence, which weakens Truth with Prejudices; and is unreasonable to be used, till such means of rational Conviction hath been appli'd, as leaving no excuse for Ignorance condemns mens Obstinacy to deseru'd Penalties.--Violent Motions are neither Manly, Christian nor Loyal.--The proper Engine of Faction is force; the Arbitrator of Beasts, not of reasonable Men, much less of humble Christians and loyal Subjects, in matters of Religion.

XIV. Upon the Covenant.—Religion requires Charity and Candor to others of different Opinions.—Nothing Violent and Injurious can be Religious.

XV. Upon the many Jealousies raised, and Scandals cast upon the King to stir up the People against him.—In point of true Conscientious Tenderness (attended with Humility and Meekness, not with proud or arrogant Activity, which seeks to hatch every egge of indifferent Opinion to Faction or Schism) I have oft declared how little I desire my Laws and Scepter should intrench over Gods Sovereignty, which is the only King of mens Consciences.

XXVII. To the Prince of Wales.—Take heed of abetting to any Factions; your partial adhering to any one Side gains you not so great Advantages in some Mens Hearts (who are prone to be of their Kings Religion) as it looseth you in others, who think themselves, and their Profession, first despised, then persecuted by you.—My Counsel and Charge to you is, That you seriously consider the former real or obliqued Miscarriages, which might occasion my Troubles, that you may avoid them.—A Charitable Connivance and Christian Toleration, often dissipates their Strength whom rougher Opposition fortifies.—Always keep up Solid Piety and those Fundamental Truths (which mend both Hearts and Lives of Men) with impartial Favour and Justice.—Your Prerogative is best shewed and exercised in remitting rather then exacting the rigour of the Law, there being nothing worse than legal Tyranny.

And

And as this was the Sence and Judgment of a King that Time and the greatest Troubles had inform'd with a superiour Judgment, (and which to be sure highly justifies the measures that are now taken) So Dr *Hudson* his *Plain-dealing Chaplin* must not be forgotten by us on this occasion, who took the freedom to tell his Royal Master, *That he lookt upon the Calamities he labour'd under, to be the hand of God upon him, for not having given God his due over Conscience.*

One can easily Imagin this to be Reformation Language, and then it is not hard to think how low that Church must be fallen, that from so free and excellent a Principle, is come to make, execute and uphold Penal Laws for Religion, against her Conscientious Neighbours ; but it is to be hoped, that like Nebuchadnezzar's *Image*, whose Feet was a mixture of *Iron* and *Clay*, and therefore could not stand forever, Persecution will not be able to mix so with the Seed of Men, but that Humanity will overcome it, and Mankind one day be delivered from that Iron hard and fierce Nature.

I have done with my Church of *Englands* Evidences against Persecution. And for the Judgment of all sorts of Dissenters in that Point, let their Practice have been what it will, nothing is clearer then that they disallow of Persecution, of which their daily Addresses of thanks to the King, for his Gracious Reprieve by his Excellent Declaration are an undoubted proof.

Thus then we see, it is evident, that it is not only the Duty of all Parties, as they would be thought Christians, to Repeal Penal Laws for Religion, but upon a fair enquiry, we see it is the avowed Principle of every Party at one time or other that Conscience ought not to be compel'd, nor Religion impos'd upon worldly Penalties. And so I come to the third and last part of this Discourse.

PART III.

It is the Interest of all Parties, and especially the Church of England.

AS I take all Men to be unwillingly separated from their Interests, and consequently ought only to be sought and discours'd in them, so it must be granted me on all hands, that Interests *change* as well as Times, and 'tis the Wisdom of a Man to *observe* the Courses, and *humor* the Motions of his Interest, as the best way to preserve it. And least any ill-natur'd or mistaken Person should call it temporizing, I make this early Provision; That I mean no immoral or corrupt compliance: A Temporizing, deservedly base with Men of Virtue, and which in all times, my Practice as well as Judgment hath shown the last Aversion to. For upon the Principle I now go, and which I lay down, as common and granted in Reason and Fact with all Parties concern'd in this Discourse, that Man, does not change, that *morrally* follows his Interest under all its Revolutions, because to be true to his Interest in his first civil Principle. I pre-mise this to introduce what I have to offer, with respect to the Interests to be now treated upon.

And first, I say, I take it to be the Interest of the Church of *England* to abolish the *Penal Laws*, because it never was her Interest to make them. My reasons for that Opinion are these. First, they have been an Argument to invalidate the Sufferings of the Reformers, because if it be unlawful to disobey Government about matters of Religion they were in the wrong. And if they say; O but they were in Error that punish'd their Non-conformity; I answer, how can she prove that she is Infallibly in the Right? And if this cannot be done, she com-

pels to an uncertainty upon the same terms. *Secondly*, She has overthrown the Principles upon which she separated from *Rome*. For if it be unlawful to plead Scripture and Conscience to vindicate Dissent from her Communion, it was unlawful for her upon the same Plea to dissent from the Church of *Rome*, unless she will say again, that she was in the Right, but the other in the Wrong, and she knows this is no Answer, but a begging of the Question ; for they that separate from her, think themselves as Serious, Devout, and as much in the Right as she could do. If then *Conscience* and *Scripture*, interpreted with the best Light she had, were the ground of her Reformation, she must allow the Liberty she takes, or *she eats her Words, and subverts her Foundation* ; then which nothing can be more destructive to the Interest of any Beeing, Civil or Ecclesiastical *Thirdly*, The *Penal Laws* have been the great *Make-bate* in the Kingdom from the beginning. For if I should grant that she had once been truly the Church of *England*, I mean, consisting of all the People of *England* (which she was not, for there were divers Parties dissenting from the first of her establishment) yet since it afterwards appear'd she was but one Party tho' the biggest, she ought not to have made her Power more National than her Faith, nor her Faith so by the force of her Temporal Authority. 'Tis true she got the Magistrate of her side, but she engaged him too far. For she knew Christ did not leave *Casar Executor* to his last Will and Testament, and that that should be the reason why she did so, was none of the best *Ornaments* to her Reformation. That she was but a Party, tho' the biggest, by the Advantages that temporal Power brought her, I shall easily prove, but I will introduce it with a short Account of our State-Reformation here in *England*.

Henry the Eighth, was a kind of *Hermophredite* in Religion, or in the Language of the times, a *Trimmer* ; being a meddly of Papist

Papist and Protestant, and that part he acted to the Life, or to the Death rather; Sacrificing on the same Day Men of both Religions, because one was not Protestant enough, and t'other Papist enough for him. In this time were some *Anabaptists*, for the Distinction of Church of *England*, and *Calvinist* was not then known.

Edward the Sixth succeeded, a Prince that promised Virtues, that might more than ballance the Excesses of his Father, and yet by *Arch-Bishop Cranmer*, was compelled to sign a Warrant to burn poor *Joan of Kent*, a famous Woman, but counted an Enthusiast: But to prove what I said of him, 'twas not without frequent Denials and Tears, and the Bishop taking upon him to answer for it at Gods Judgment; of which I hope his Soul was discharged, tho his Body, by the same Law, suffered the same Punishment in the succeeding Reign. Thus even the *Protestants* begun with Blood for meer Religion, and taught the *Romanists*, in succeeding times, how to deal with them.

At this time the Controversie grew warm between the Church of *England* and the *Calvanists*, that were the Abler Preachers and the better Livers. The Bishops being mostly men of State, and some of them looking rather backward than forward, Witness the Difficulty the King had to get *Hooper* Consecrated Bishop, without Conformity to the reserved Ceremonies.

Queen Mary came in, and ended the Quarrel at the Stake. Now *Ridly* and *Hooper* hug, and are the dearest Brethren and best Friends in the World. *Hooper* keeps his Ground, and *Ridly* stoops with his Ceremonies to t'others further Reformation. But this Light and Union flow'd from their Persecution: For those abroad at *Frankford*, and other places were not upon so good Terms: Their Fewds grew so great that the one refused Communion with the other, many endeavours

were used to quence the Fire, but they were ineffectual ; at best it lay under the *Ashes* of their Affliction for another time ; for no sooner was *Queen Elizabeth* upon her Throne then they returned, and their Difference with them. They managed it civilly for a while, but Ambition in some, and Covetousness in others on the one hand, and Discretion giving way to Resentment on the other, they first ply the *Queen* and her Ministers, and when that ended in favour of the *Men of Ceremony*, the others arraigned them before the first Reformers abroad, at *Geneva*, *Bazil*, *Zurich*, &c. The leading Prelates by their Letters, as Doctor Burnet lately tells us, in his Printed Relation of his Travels, clear themselves to those first Doctors of any such Imputation, and lay all upon the Queen, who for Reasons of State would not be brought to so Inceremonious a way of Worship as that of the *Calvanists*.

At this time there were *Papists*, *Protestants*, *Evangelists*, *Præcisions*, *Ubiquitists*, *Familists* or *Enthusiasts* and *Anabaptists in England*; when the very first Year of her Reign, a Law for *Uniformity in Worship and Discipling* was enacted, and more followed of the severest Nature, and sometimes executed. Thus then we see that there never was such a thing as a Church of *England* since the Days of *Popery*, that is, a Church or Communion containing all the People of the Kingdom, and so cannot be said to be so much as a *Triumphant* of the Reformation; nevertheless she got the Blessing of the Civil Magistrate. She made him great to be great by him : If She might be the *Church*, He should be the *Head*. Much good may the *Bargain* do her. Now is the time for her to stand to her Principle. I never knew any body exceed their Bounds that were not met with at last. If we could escape Men, God we cannot, his Providence will overtake us, and find us out.

By all this then it appearing, that the Church of *England* was not the Nation, the Case is plain that the *Penal Laws* were a *Make-bate*, for they Sacrificed every sort of People whose Consciences differed from the Church of *England*; which first put the *Romanist* upon flattering Prerogative, and courting its Shelter from the wrath of those Laws. The Address could not be unpleasant to Princes; and we see it was not; for *King James*, that came in with Invectives against Popery, entring the List with the Learn'd of that Church, and charging her with all the Marks the *Revelation* gives to that of *Anti-christ*, grew at last so tame and easy towards the *Romanists*, that our own Story tells us of the Fears of the encrease of *Popery* in the latter Parliament of his Reign.

In *King Charles* the First's time, no body can doubt of the Complaint, because that was in great measure the drift of every Parliment, and at last one Reasön of the War. On the other hand the Severity of the Bishops against Men of their own Principles, and in the main, of their own Communion, either because they were more zealous in Preaching, more followed of the People, or eat Id not wear some odd Garment, and less, lead the Dance on a Lords Day at a Maypole, (the Relique of *Flora* the *Roman Strumpet*) or perhaps for rubbing upon the Ambition, Covetousness and Laziness of the Dignified, and Ignorance and Loosness of the ordinary Clergy of the Church (of which I could produce Five hundred gross Instances) I say these things breed bad Blood, and in part, gave beginnings to those Animosities, that at last broke forth, with some other Pretences into all those National Troubles that agitated this poor Kingdom for Ten Years together, in which the Church of *England* became the greatest Loser, Her Clergy turn'd out, her Nobility and Gentry Sequestred, Decimated, Imprisoned, &c. And whatever she is pleased to think, nothing is truer, then that her *Penal Laws*, and Conduct in the

Star-Chamber, and High-Commission-Court in matters of Religion, was her overthrow.

'Tis as evident, the same Humour since the Restoration of the late King, has had almost the same Effect. For nothing was grown so little and contemptible as the Church of *England* in this Kingdom she now intitles her self the Church of: Witness the Elections of the last three Parliaments before this, I know it may be said the Persons chosen were Church goers; I confess it, for the Law would have them so. But no body were more avers to the Politicks of the Clergy; insomuch that the Parson and the Parish almost every where divided upon the question of their Election. In truth, it has been the *Favour* and *Countenance* of the Crown, and not her intrinsick Interest or Value, that has kept her up to this Day; else her *Penal Laws*, the *Bulwork* of the Church of *England*, by the same figure, that she is one against Popery, had sunk her long since.

I hope I may, by this time conclude without offence, that the *Penal Laws* have been a *Make-bate* in the great Family of the Kingdom, setting the Father against his Children, and Brethren against Brethren; not only giving the Empire to one, but endeavouring to extinguish the rest, and that for this the Church of *England* has once paid a severe Reckoning. I apply it thus: Is it not her Interest to be careful she does it not a second time? she has a fair Opportunity to prevent it, and keep her self where she is, that is, the publick *Religion* of the Country, with the real Maintenances of it; which is a plain preference to all the rest. If she hopes by her Aversion to a general Ease, to set up for a *Bulwork* against Popery, one Year will shew the trick, and mightily deceive her, and the Opportunity will be lost, and another Bargain driven, I dare assure her, mightily to her Disadvantage. Violence and Tyranny are no natural Consequences of Popery, for then they would

would follow every where, and in all places and times alike. But we see in twenty Governments in *Germany* there is none for Religion, nor was not for an Age in *France*, and in *Poland*, the Popish Cantons of *Switzerland*, *Venice*, *Lucca*, *Colonia*, &c. where that Religion is Dominant, the People enjoy their Ancient and Civil Rights a little more steadily than they have of late time done in some Protestant Countries nearer home, almost ever since the Reformation. Is this against Protestantism? No, but very much against Protestants, For had they been true to their Principles, we had been upon better Terms. So that the Reformation was not the Fault, but not keeping to it better than some have done; For whereas they were *Papists* that both obtained the *Great Charter* and *Charter of Forests*, and in the successive Reigns of the Kings of their Religion, industriously laboured the Confirmation of them, as the great *Text* of their Liberties and Properties, by above thirty other Laws; we find almost an equal Number to Destroy them, and but one made in their Favour since the Reformation, and that shrowdly against the will of the high Church-men too; I mean the *Petition of Right*, in the third Year of *Charles* the first. In short, They desire a legal Security with us, and we are afraid of it, least it should insecure us; when nothing can do it so certainly as their Insecurity, for Safety makes no Man Desperate. And he that seeks ease by Law, therefore does it, because he would not attempt it by Force. Are we afraid of their Power and yet provoke it? If this Jealousie and Aversion prevail, it may drive her to a Bargain with the Kingdom for such general Redemption of Property, as may desolve our great Corporation of Conscience, and then she will think that half a Loaf had been better than no Bread, and that it had been more advisable to have parted with *Penal Laws*, that only serv'd to dress her in Satyr, than have lost all for keeping them; especially, when it was

was but parting with *Spurs, Claws and Bills* that made her look more like a *Vulter* than a *Dove*, and a *Lion* than a *Lamb*.

But I proceed to my next Reason, why it is her Interest to Repeal those *Penal Laws* (tho a greater cannot be advanced to Men than self *Preservation*) and that is, *That she else breaks with a King heartily inclin'd to preserve her by any way that is not Persecuting*, and whose Interest she once pursu'd at all Adventures, when more than she sees was suggested to her by the Men of the Interest she opposed in favour of his Claim. What then has befallen her, that she changes the course she took with such resolutions of perseverance? for bringing him to the Crown with this Religion, could not be more her Duty to his Title, or her Interest to support her own, than it is still, to be fair with him. If she ow'd the one to him and to Christianity, she is not less indebted to her self the other, Does he seek to impose his own Religion upon her? By no means. There is no body would abhor the Attempt, or, at all Adventures, condemn it more than my self. What then is the matter? why he desires ease for his Religion, she does not think fit to consider him in this (no not the King she brought with this Objection to the Crown) Certainly she is much in the wrong, and shews her self an ill Courtier (tho it was become her calling) first to give him Roast-meat, then beat him with the Spit. Is not this to quit those high Principles of Loyalty and Christianity she valued her self once upon, and what she can, provoke the Mischiefs she fears? certainly this is dividing in Judgment from him that she has acknowledged to be her *Ecclesiastical Head*.

My fifth Reason is, that as the making and executing the *Penal Laws* for Religion affects all the several Parties of Protestant Dissenters as well as the Papists (the Judges in *Kang-han's time*, and he at the Head of them, giving it as their Opinion,

nion, they were equally exposed to those Laws) and that are thereby naturally driven into an Interest with them; so it is at this time greatly the Prudence of the Church of *England* to repeal them, for by so doing she divides the Interest that self Preservation allows all Men to pursue, that are united by danger: And since she is assured the *Papists* shall not have the less Ease in this King's time than if the Laws were Repeal'd, and that her Fears are not of the succeeding Raigns, how is their Repeal a greater Insecurity, especially, when by that, she draws into her Interest all the Protestant Dissenters, that are abundantly more considerable than the *Papists*, and that are as unwilling that Popery should be *National* as her self. For if this be not granted, see what Reputation follows to the Church of *England*. She tells the King she does not desire his Friends should be persecuted, yet the forbearance must not be by *Declaration* to save the Government, nor by *Law* to save her; and without one of these Warrants, every civil Magistrate and Officer in *England* is Perjured that suffers them in that Liberty against Law. How can she be sincerely willing that should be done, that she is not willing should be done legally.

But Sixthly, the Church of *England* does not know but they or some other Party may at one time or other prevail. It seems to me her Interest to set a good Example, and so to bespeak easie Terms for her self. I know of none intended, and believe no body but her self can place her so low, yet if it were her unhappiness, I think to have civil Property secur'd out of the Question of Religion, and Constraint upon Conscience prevented by a Glorious *Magna Charta* for the liberty of it, were not a thing of ill Consequence to her Interest. Let us but consider what other Princes did for their own Religion, within the last seven Raigns, when they came to the Crown, and we cannot think so soft and equal a thing as an impartial

Liberty of Conscience, after all that has been said of a Popish Successor, an ordinary Character of a Prince, or a mean Assurance to us: This ought not to slip her Reflection. Besides, there is some care due to Posterity: That the present Members of her Communion may escape the Temptation, their Children may not: They may change the Religion of their Education, and Conscientiously chuse some other Communion. Would they submit the Fortunes they leave them to the Rape of hungry Courtiers, Biggots and indigent Informers, or have their poor Posterity Impoverisht, Banisht, or Executed for Sober and Religious Dissent? God knows into whose hands these Laws at last may fall, what Mischief they may do, and to whom. Believe me, a King of the humor of Sr J. K. of the West, or Sr W. A. of Reading, or St R. B. or Sr S. S. of London, would, with such vouchers, quickly make a Golgotha of the Kingdom. If she thinks her self considerable in Number or Estate, she will have the more to loose. Let her not therefore establish that in the Prejudice of others, that may in the hands of others turn to her Prejudice.

Lastly, I would not have her miss the advantage that is design'd her by those that perhaps she thinks worst of. I dare say no body would willingly see the Presbyterian in her Chair, and yet that may happen to be the Consequence of her Tenaciousness in a little time. For if the Aversion her Sons promote by whole sale against Popery should prevail, the remains of it in her self are not like to escape that Reformation: I mean, her Episcopal Government, and the Ceremonies of her Worship, for which she has vexed the most Conscientious People of this Kingdom above an Age past. And the Presbyterian being a Rich, Industrious and Numerous Party, as well among the Nobility, and Gentry, as Trading and Country People, I cannot see but the next Motion, naturally speaking, is like to tend that way; for other Parties, however well esteemed,

esteemed may seem too great a step of Reformation at once, and methinks she has tasted enough of that *Regiment*, to be once wise, and keep the *Ballance* in her own Hands. And certain it is that nothing will so effectually do this, as the entreated Liberty of Conscience ; for then there will be four Parties of Dissenters besides her self, to *Ballance* against any Designs that may warp or byass things to their Advancement. And that which ought to induce the Church of *England* not a little to hasten, as well as do the thing, is this ; she is now a sort of National Church by *Power*, she will then be the Publick Church by Concurrence of all Parties. Instead of Enemies to invade or undermine her, they that should do it are made the Friends of her Safety by the Happiness they enjoy through her complacency : And if any should be so unnatural or ungrateful to her, the Interest of the rest will oblige them to be her *Spys* and *Security* against the Ambition of any such Party : I do heartily pray to God that he would enlighten the Eyes of her Leaders, and give them good Hearts too, that *Faction* may not prevail against Charity, in the name of Religion : And above all, that she would not be proud of her Numbers, or stand off upon that Reflection ; for that alone will quickly lessen them in a Nation loving Freedom as much as this we live in ; and what appears in the Town is an ill Glass to take a Prospect of the Country by : There are Parishes that have Fifteen Thousand Souls in them and if two come to Church it is matter of Brag, tho half the rest be sown among the several dissenting Congregations of their Judgment. I would not have her mistaken, tho *Popery* be an Unpopular thing, 'tis as certain she of a long time has not been Popular, and on that Principle never can be : And if she should Plow with that Heifer now, and gain a little by the Aversion to Popery ; when it is discern'd that Popery does return to the civil Interest of the Kingdom they will quickly be

Friends. For besides that we are the easiest and best natur'd People in the World to be appeas'd, there are those charms in Liberty and Property to English Nature that no endeavours can resist or disappoint. And can we reasonably think the Romanists will be wanting in that, when they see it is their own (and perhaps their only) Interest to do so? These are the Arguments which, I confess, have prevailed with me to importune the Church of England to yeild to the Repeal of all the Penal Statutes, and I should be glad to see them either well refuted or submitted to.

I shall now Address my self to those of the *Roman Church*, and hope to make it appear it is their Interest to sit down thankfully with the *Liberty of Conscience* herein desired, and that a *Toleration and no more*, is that which all Romanists ought to be satisfied with. My Reasons are these. First, The Opposition that Popery every where finds: For in nothing is the Kingdom so much of a mind as in this Aversion: 'Tis no news, and so may be the better said and taken. I say then this Unity, this Universality and this Visibility against Popery, make the attempt, for more than Liberty of Conscience, too great and dangerous. I believe there may be some poor silly Biggots that hope bigger, and talk further, but who can help that? there are weak People of all sides, and they will be making a Pudder: But what's the Language of their true Interest, the Infallible Guide of the wiser Men? Safety certainly; and that in succeeding Raigns to chuse: And if so, their Steps must be modest, for they are Watcht and Number'd. And tho' their Prudence should submit to their Zeal, both must yeild to Necessity, whether they like it or no. What they convert upon the Square, Perswasion I mean, is their own, and much good may it do them. But the fear is not of this, and for compelling the avers Genius of the Kingdom, they have not the means, what ever they would do if they had them:

Which

Which is my second Reason. I say they have not the Power, and that is what we apprehend most. There are three things that prove this in my Opinion: First, their want of Hands, next, want of Time, and lastly, their intestine Division; which whatever we think, is not inconsiderable. They are few, we must all agree, to the Kingdom, upon the best Computation that could be made. Out of eight Millions of People, they are not *Thirty Thousand*, and those but thinly sown up and down the Nation; by which it appears that the Disproportion of the natural strength is not less than two hundred and seventy Persons to one. So that Popery in *England* is like a *Spirit without a Body*, or a General without an Army. It can hurt no more than Bullets without Powder, or a Sword and no Hand to use it. I dare say, there is not of that Communion, enough at once, to make all the Coal Fires in *London*, and yet we are apprehensive they are able to consume the whole Kingdom. I am still more afraid of her Fears than of them; for tho' they seem high, she thinks their Religion in no Reign has appeared much lower.

O but they have the King of their Side, and he has the Executive Power in his Hands! True, and this I call the Artificial Strength of the Kingdom. But I say, first we have his Word to bind him. And tho' some may think our Kings cannot be tyed by their People, certainly they may be tyed by themselves. What if I don't look upon the Act of both Houses to oblige the King, his own Concession must; and that may be given in an Act of State. I take the King to be as well obliged in Honour and Conscience to what he promises his People in another Method, as if it had been by his Royal Assent in Parliament; for an honest mans Word is good every where, and why a Kings should not I can't tell. 'Tis true, the place differs and the Voice comes with greater Solemnity, but why it should with greater Truth I know not. And if

the Church of England will but be advised to give him the opportunity of keeping his repeated Word with her, and not deprive her self of that advantage by Jealousies and Distances that make her suspected, and may force him into another Conduct, I cannot help believing that the King will not to a tittle let her fell the assurance and benefit of his Promises.

But next, we have his Age for our Security, which is the second Proof, of the second Reason, why the Papists should look no farther than a Toleration. This is the want of time I mentioned. They have but one Life in the Lease; and 'tis out of their Power to renew; and this Life has liv'd fast too, and is got within seven of threescore; a greater Age than most of his Ancestors ever attain'd. Well, but he has an Army and many Officers of his own Religion. And if it be so, what can it do? It may suppress an Insurrection, but upon the attempts we foolishly fear, they were hardly a Breakfast to the Quarters they live in. For if they were together, all the confines or remote parts of the Nation would rise like Grass upon them, and if dispersed, to be sure they have not strength for such an Attempt.

But if they are not sufficient, there is a Potent Prince not far off, can help the Design, who is not angry with Protestantcy at home only. Suppose this, is there not as Potent Naval Powers to assist the Constitution of the Kingdom from such Invasions? yes, and Land ones too. And as the Protestant Governments have more Ships than the other, so an equal Land Force, when by such attempts to make Popery universal, they are awaken'd to the use of them: But certainly we must be very silly to think the King should suffer so great a shake to his own Interest as admitting an Army of Foreigners to enter his Kingdom on any pretence, must necessarily occasion. These Bull-Beggars, and Raw-Heads and Bloody-Bones, are the Malice of some, and Weakness of others. But time, that informs Children,

Children, will tell the World the meaning of the Fright.

The third Proof of my second Reason, is *the Intestine Division among themselves*. That Division, weakens a great Body, and renders a small one harmless; all will agree: Now that there is such a thing as Division among them is town talk. The *Seculars* and *Regulars* have ever been two Interests all the Roman Church over, and they are not only so here, but the *Regulars* differ among themselves. There is not a Coffee-House in Town that does not freely tell us that the *Jesuites* and *Benedictines* are at variance; that Count Da Da the Popes Nunzio and Bishop Lyborn Dissent mightily from the Politicks of the first; Nay t'other Day the Story was that they had prevail'd Entirely over them. The Lords and Gentlemen of her Communion have as warmly contested about the lengths they ought to go, *Moderation* seems to be the conclusion. Together they are little, and can do little; and divided, they are Contemptible instead of Terrible.

Lastly, the *Roman Church* ought to be discreet, and think of nothing further then the extreated general Ease, because it would be an extream that must beget another in the succeeding Reign. For as I can never think her so weak as well as base, that after all her Arguments for the *Jus divinum* of Succession, she should, in the Face of the World, attempt to violate it in the wrong of One of another Perswasion, (for that were an eternal loss of her with Mankind) So if she does not, and yet is Extravagant, she only rises higher to fall lower then all others in another Rain. This were provoking their own Ruin. And to say true, either way would, as the seconde Letter has it, discredit her for ever, and make true Prophets of those they had taken such pains to prove false Witnesses. And supposing her to reckon upon he just Succession, nothing can recommend her, or continuall her happiness in a Reign of another Judgment, but this Liberty

berty equally maintained, that other Perswasions, more numerous, for that reason as well as for their own sakes, are obliged to insure her. Here the Foundation is broad and strong, and what is built upon it, has the looks of long Life. The Indenture will at least be, *quint-pertite*, and Parties are not so mortal as Men. And as this joyns, so it preserves Interest intire, which amounts to a *Religious Amity* and a *Civil Unity* at the worst.

Upon the whole matter, I advise the Members of the *Roman Communion* in this Kingdom, to be moderate, 'tis their Duty and it belongs to all Men to see it and feel it from them, and it behoves them mightily they would; for the first part of this Discourse belongs to their *Hopes*, as well as to the Church of Englands *Fears*, viz. the *Duty and Spirit of Christianity*. Next, let them do *good Offices* between the King and his excellent Children, for as that will be well taken by so affectionate a Father, so it gives the lie to their Enemies Suggestions, and recommends them to the Grace and Favour of the Successors. And having said this, I have said all that belongs to them in particular. There is left only my Address to the *Protestant Dissenters* and a general Conclusion to finish this Discouse.

Your Case that are called *Protestant Dissenters*, differs mightily from that of the *Church of England and Rome*. For the first have the *Laws* for her, the last the *Prince*. Those Laws are *against you*, and she is not willing they should be Repeal'd: The Prince offers to be kind to you if you please; Your Interest, in this Conjunction, is the *Question*. I think none ought to be made, that it is the *Liberty of Conscience*, desired, because you have much more need of it, having neither Laws nor Prince of your side, nor a Successor of any of your Perswasions. The Fears of Popery I know reach you; but it is to be remembered also, that if the Laws are not Repeal'd,

there

there wants no new ones to Destroy you, of the Papists making; so that every fear you are taught to have of their Repeal, is against your selves. Suppose your Apprehensions well grounded, you can but be Destroy'd; Which is most comfortable for you to suffer by Law (or without it?) The Church of *England*, by her *Penal Laws*, and the *Doctrin of Headship*, has Armed that Religion (as it falls out) to Destroy you. Nay, has made it a Duty in the King to do it, from which (says she) nothing but an *Act of Parliament* can absolve him, and that she is not willing to allow. And is it not as reasonable that you should seek their Repeal, that if you suffer from the Papists, It may be without human Law, as well as against Christ's Law, as for the Church of *England* to keep them in force, because if she suffers, it shall be against the Laws made to uphold her? For not repealing them, brings you an inevitable mischief, and her, at most, but an uncertain safety; tho' tis certain, she at the same time will Sacrifice you to it. And yet if I were in her case, it would please me better to remove Laws that might reproach me, and stop my Mouth when turn'd against me, and be content, that if I Suffer for my Religion, it is against the Law of *God, Christianity*, and the *Fundamentals* of the old and true Civil Government of my Country, before such Laws helpt to spoil it. In short, you must either go to *Church*, or *Meet*, or let fall your *Worshipping of God* in the way you believe. If the first, you are *Hypocrites*, and give away the Cause, and reproach your dead Brethrens Sincerity, and gratifie the old accusation of *Schism, Ambition, &c.* and finally lose the Hope and Reward of all your Sufferings. If the second, viz. that you *Meet against Law*, you run into the Mouth of the Government, whose Teeth are to meet in you and Destroy you, as by Law established. If the last, you deny your Faith, over-throw your own Arguments, fall away from the Apostolical Doctrine of

assembling together, and so must fall into the Hands of God, and under the Troubles of your Consciences and woundings of his Spirit, of which 'tis said, *who can bare them.* So that nothing is plainer then that *Protestant Dissenters* are not oblig'd to govern themselves after *such Church of England Measures*, supposing her Fears and Jealousies better Bottom'd then they are: For they are neither in this Kings time in the same Condition, with her if the Penal Laws remain in force, nor like to be so; if she can help it, in the next Raign, if they are not Repeal'd in this; so that they are to be certainly Persecuted now, in hopes of an uncertain Liberty then. Uncertain both whether it will be in her Power, and whether she will do it if it be. The *Language of Fear and Assurance* are two things, *Affliction* promises what *Prosperity* rarely performs. Of this the Promises made to induce the late Kings Restoration, and the cancelling of the former Declaration, and what followed upon both are a plain proof. And tho the last *Westminster Parliament* enclin'd to it; no body so much oppos'd it as the *Clergy*, and the most Zealous Sons of that Church: And if they could or would not then see it to be reasonable, I can't see why one should trust to People so selfish and short sighted. But if she will stoop to all those Dissenting Interests that are Protestant, it must either be by a *comprehension*, and then she must part with her *Bishops*, her *Common-Prayer*, her *Ceremonies*: and this it self is but *Presbyterian*; (and she must go lower yet, if she will comprehend the rest) or, if not, she must Persecute or give this *Liberty of Conscience* at last; which, that she will ever yeild to uncompl'd, and at a time too, when there is none to do it, while she refuses it under her present pressing Circumstances, I confess I cannot apprehend. But there is yet one Argument that can never fail to oblige your compliance with the General Ease entreated; viz. That the *Penal Laws are against our great Law of*

of Property, and so void in themselves. This has been the Language of every *Apology*, and that which, to say true, is not to be answer'd: How then can you decline to help their Repeal, that in *Conscience*, *Reason* and *Law* you think void in their own Nature?

Lastly, There is nothing that can put you in a Condition to help your selves or the Church of *England* against the *Domination of Popery*, but that which she weakly thinks the way to hurt you both, viz. *The Repeal of the Penal Laws*. For as you are, you are tyed Hand and Foot, you are not your own men, you can neither serve her nor your selves, you are fast in the Stocks of her Laws, and the course she would have you take, is to turn *Martyrs* under them to support them. If you like the *Bargain* you are the best natur'd People in the World, and something more. And since Begging is in Fashion, I should desire no other *Boon*; for upon so plain a loss of your Wits, your Estates will of course fall a stray to the Government, so that without the help of a *Penal Law*, you make an admirable Prize.

I have no mind to end so pleasantly with you. I have a sincere and Christian regard to you and yours. Be not Couzn'd, nor Captious, at this Juncture. I know some of you are told, if you lose this Liberty, you introduce Idolatry, and for Conscience sake you cannot do it. But that's a pure mistake, and improv'd, I fear, by those that know it is so, which makes it the worse; for it is not introducing Idolatry (taking for granted that Popery is so) but saving the People from being Destroy'd that profess that Religion. If Christ and his Apostles had taken this course with the World, they must have killed them instead of converting them. 'Tis your mistake to think the Jewish rigorous Constitution is adequate to the Christian Dispensation; by no means: That one Conceit of Judaising Christianity in our Politicks, has fill'd the World with Misery,

of which this poor Kingdom has had its share. *Idolators* are to be *Enlighten'd* and *Perswaded*, as St. Paul did the *Athenians* and *Romans*, and not *knock'd on the Head*, which mends no body. And to say a Christian Magistrate is to do that, that a Christian can't do, is ridiculous; unless like the *Bishop of Munster*, who goes like a Bishop one part of the day, and a Souldier the other; he is to be a *Christian in the morning and a Magistrate in the afternoon*. Besides, 'tis one thing to enact a Religion National, and compel Obedience to it (which would make this *Café* abominable indeed) and another thing to take off unchristian Penalties for the sake of such mistakes, since that is to give them Power to hurt others, and this only to save you from being hurt for meer Religion.

To conclude my Address to you, of all People, it would look the most disingenious in you, and give you an Aire, the least Sensible, Charitable and Christian not to endeavour such an Ease that have so much wanted it, and so often and so earnestly preffed it, even to clamour. But that you should do it for their sakes who have used you so, and that the Instruments of their Cruelty, *the Penal Laws*; should from a common Grievance become a Darling to any among you, will be such a Reproach to your Understandings and Consciences, that no Time or Argument can wipe off, and which I beseech God and you to prevent.

The Conclusion.

I Shall conclude with one Argument, that equally concerns you all, and that is this; you claim the Caracter of *English Men*. Now to be an *English Man*, in the fence of the Government, is to be a *Freeman*, whether *Lord* or *Commoner*, to hold his

his Liberty and Possessions by *Laws of his own consenting unto*,
and not to forfeit them upon Faults made Faults, by Humour,
Faction or partial Interest prevailing in the Governing-part against
the Constitution of the Kingdom; but for Faults only,
that are such in the nature of civil Government; to wit,
Breaches of those Laws that are made by the whole, in pursuance
of common Right for the good of the whole.

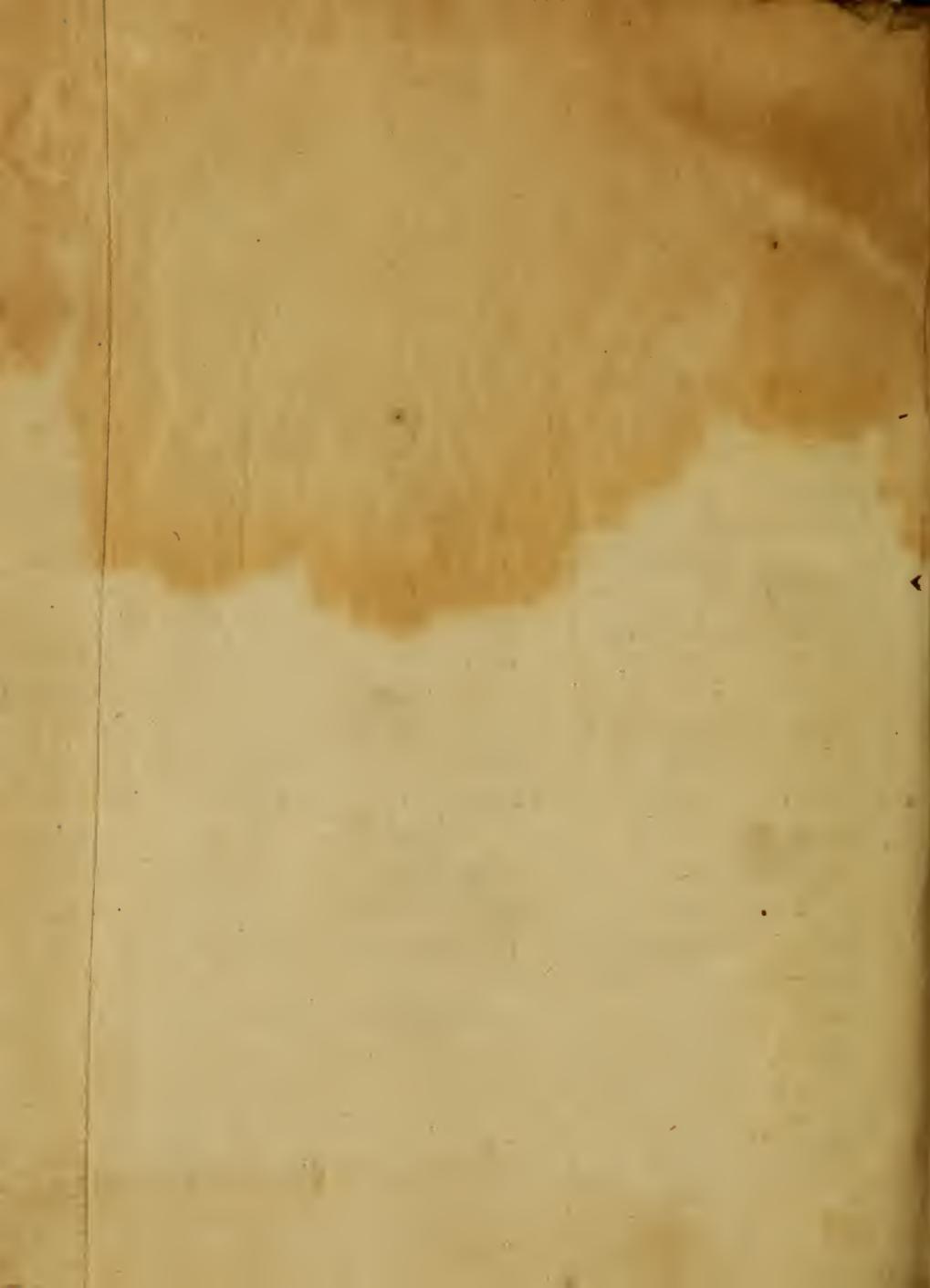
This regard must at no time be neglected, or violated towards any one Interest; for the moment we concede to such a Breach upon our general Liberty, be it from an Aversion we carry to the Principles of those we expose, or some little sinister and temporary Benefit of our own, we sacrifice ourselves in the Prejudices we draw upon others, or suffer them to fall under; for our Interest in this respect is common. If then as *English-men*, we are as mutually interested in the inviolable conservation of each others civil Rights, as men embark'd in the same Vessel are to save the Ship they are in for their own sakes, we ought to Watch, Serve and Secure the Interest of one another, because it is our own to do so; and not by any means endure that to be done to please some narrow regard of any one Party, *which may be drawn in Example at some other turn of Power to our own utter Ruin.*

Had this Honest, Just, Wise and English Consideration prevailed with our Ancestors of all Opinions from the days of *Richard the second*, there had been less *Blood, Imprisonment, Plunder, Beggery* for the Government of this Kingdom to answer for. Shall I speak within our own knowledge, and that without Offence, there has been Ruin'd, since the late Kings Restoration, above *Fifteen Thousand Families*, and more than *Five Thousand Persons* Dead under Bonds for matters of *meer Conscience* to God: But who hath laid it to Heart? It is high time now we should, especially when our King, with so much Grace and Goodness leads us the way.

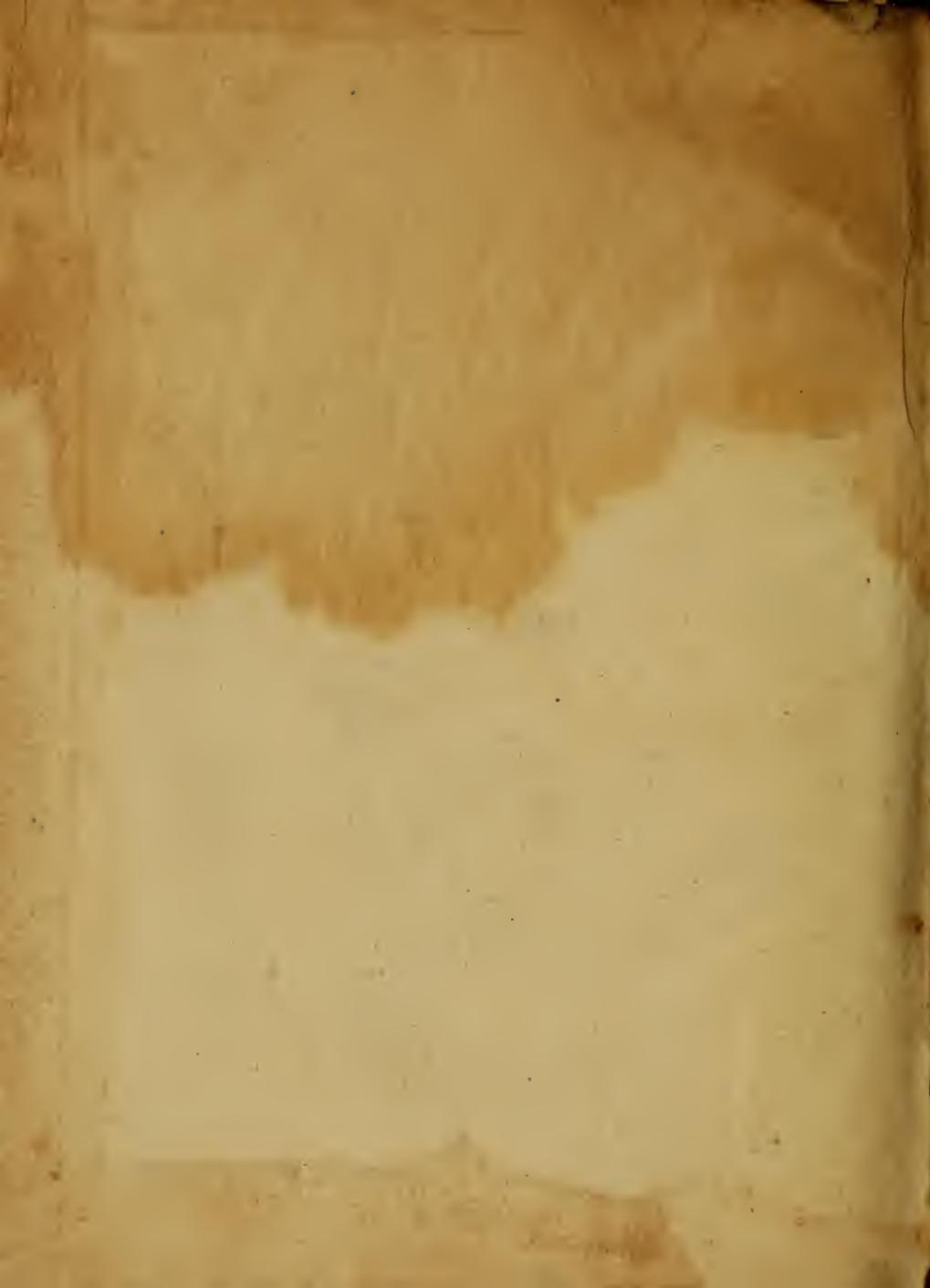
I beseech you all, if you have any Reverence towards God, any Value for the Excellent Constitution of this Kingdom, any Tenderness for your Posterity, any Love for your selves, you would embrace this happy Conjunction; and pursue a common Expedient ; That since we cannot agree to meet in one Profession of Religion, we may entirely do it in this common civil Interest where we are all equally engaged ; and therefore we ought for our own sakes to seek one anothers Security, that if we cannot be the Better, we may not be the Worse for our Perswasions, in things that bear no relation to them, and in which, it is impossible we should suffer, and the Government escape, that is so much concern'd in the civil Support and Prosperity of every Party and Person that belongs to it.

Let us not therefore uphold *Penal Laws* against any of our Religious Perswasions, nor make *Tests* out of each others Faiths, to exclude one another our civil Rights ; for by the same Reason that denying *Transubstantiation*, is made One to exclude a *Papist*, to own it, may be made one to exclude a *Church of England-man*, a *Presbyterian*, an *Independant*, a *Quaker*, and *Anabaptist* : For the Question is not who is in the right in Opinion, but whether he is not in Practice *in the wrong*, that for such an Opinion deprives his Neighbour of his common Right ? Now 'tis certain there is not one of any *Party*, that would willingly have a *Test* made out of his Belief, to abridge him of his native Priviledge ; and therefore neither the Opinion of *Transubstantiation* in the Papists, *Episcopacy* in the *Church of England* Men, *Free-will* in the *Arminian*, *Predestination* in the *Presbyterian*, *Perticular Churches* in the *Independant*, *Dipping* of adult *People* in the *Anabaptist*, nor *not-swearing* in the *Quaker*, ought to be made a *Test* of, to deprive him of the comforts of his Life, or render him incapable of the Service of his Country, to which by a natural Obligation he is indebted, and from which, no Opinion









26/11/61

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